



THE TRUTH

on education cuts

On March 15, 2019, the Ministry announced devastating cuts to Ontario's public education system. However thus far, they have refused to provide any details or formulas for those changes, and we are unable to project the final impact at this time. The following are minimum estimates of the impact of these cuts.

THE PUPIL FOUNDATION GRANT

The pupil foundation grant, in part, funds classroom teachers. The intermediate senior portion of this grant was cut by 20%. This cut includes moving average class sizes from 22:1 to 28:1 in Ontario public high schools and 35:1 for e-learning classes.

This will result in the removal of over 5,700 OSSTF/FEESO secondary school teacher positions, which will result in the removal of over 34,000 classes. To put this in context, one in every four classes would be eliminated from Ontario's secondary schools. This will also necessitate the removal of student course choice as school boards will be forced to cancel programs to meet these cuts. The Education Minister keeps repeating that, "no one will lose their job" and this may be true in terms of actual layoffs, but our students will lose their teachers through attrition and leaves.

SECONDARY PROGRAMMING GRANT

Also included in this cut is the removal of the Secondary Programming Grant. This grant was for staffing that was originally negotiated to provide extra supports for students through the hiring of student success teachers. These teachers work with our most vulnerable students on a day-to-day basis and contribute to Ontario's high graduation rate.

LOCAL PRIORITIES FUND

Also ending in August is the Local Priorities Fund. This allowed for the hiring of 219 teachers of which 91 were earmarked for special education. This represents a total of 1314 classes that will have to be closed of which 546 were in the area of special education.

Included in the Local Priorities Fund are support staff positions in the range of 298 to 354 members. Again 186 to 242 of these positions were to be used exclusively in Special Education. They provide essential supports for these students to be able to succeed in high school. These positions would include: educational assistants, social workers, behavioural assistants, and ABA trained staff among others. OSSTF/FEESO negotiated these positions in response to the need in the system for more support for our students.

There were numerous other cuts that were announced on March 15, that we cannot calculate the exact impact of yet. Of greatest concern are the removal of \$36.1 million from the Cost Adjustment Allocation and the adjustment to the School Facility Operations and Renewal Grant. School Boards will be forced to make even deeper cuts of support staff to make up for this cut.